

Sūrah Al-Mursalāt

(Those Sent)

This Sūrah is Makkī, and it has 50 verses and 2 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 50

وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفًا ﴿١﴾ فَالْعَصْفِ عَصْفًا ﴿٢﴾ وَالنَّشْرِ نَشْرًا ﴿٣﴾
 فَالْفَرْقَتِ فَرْقًا ﴿٤﴾ فَالْمُلْقِيَةِ ذِكْرًا ﴿٥﴾ عَذْرًا أَوْ تَذْرًا ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّمَا
 تُوعَدُونَ لَوَاقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾ فَإِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ ﴿٨﴾ وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ
 فُرِجَتْ ﴿٩﴾ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ نُسِفَتْ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ اقْتَتَتْ ﴿١١﴾
 لِأَيِّ يَوْمٍ أُجِّلَتْ ﴿١٢﴾ لِيَوْمِ الْفَصْلِ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ
 الْفَصْلِ ﴿١٤﴾ وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٥﴾ أَلَمْ نُهْلِكِ الْأَوَّلِينَ
 ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ نَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْآخِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ كَذَلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٨﴾
 وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ أَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُمْ مِنْ مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿٢٠﴾
 فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَى قَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ
 الْقَدَرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ
 كِفَاتًا ﴿٢٥﴾ أَحْيَاءَ وَأَمْوَاتًا ﴿٢٦﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ شَامِخَاتٍ
 وَأَسْقَيْنُكُمْ مَاءً فُرَاتًا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَيَلَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ انْطَلِقُوا
 إِلَى مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ انْطَلِقُوا إِلَى ظِلِّ ذِي ثُلُثِ شَعْبٍ

﴿٣٠﴾ لَا ظَلِيلٍ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنَ اللَّهَبِ ﴿٣١﴾ إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرِّ كَالْقَصْرِ
 ﴿٣٢﴾ كَأَنَّهُ جِمَلَتٌ صُفْرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ هَذَا
 يَوْمٌ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ
 لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ هَذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ ۚ جَمَعْنَكُمْ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَإِنْ
 كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُونِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ إِنَّ
 الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلَالٍ وَعُيُونٌ ﴿٤١﴾ وَفَوَاكِهَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ كُلُوا
 وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي
 الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ كُلُوا وَتَمَتَّعُوا
 قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ مُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ
 لَهُمْ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَبَايَ
 حَدِيثٍ ۚ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(I swear) by those (winds) that are sent one after the other, [1] and by those that blow violently, [2] and by those that spread (clouds) all over, [3] and by those (angels) who differentiate (between right and wrong) distinctly, [4] then bring down the advice, [5] providing excuses (for the believers) or giving warnings (to the disbelievers), [6] that which you are promised is sure to happen. [7] So, when the stars will be extinguished, [8] and when the sky will be split, [9] and when the mountains will be blown away as dust, [10] and when the messengers will be assembled at the appointed time, (then all matters will be decided.) [11] (Do you know) for which day has all this been delayed? [12] For the Day of Decision! [13] And what may let you know what the Day of Decision is? [14] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [15]

Did We not destroy the earlier people? [16] Then We will cause the later ones to follow them. [17] Thus We deal with the guilty ones. [18] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [19] Did We not create you from a worthless fluid? [20] Then We put it in a firm place of rest [21] for a known


period. [22] Thus, We did (all this with perfect) measure; so We are the best to measure. [23] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [24]



Did We not make the earth a container that collects [25] the living and the dead? [26] And We placed towering mountains therein, and provided you with sweet water to drink. [27] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [28] (It will be said to them that day,) "Push on to what you used to deny. [29] Push on to a canopy (of Hell's smoke) having three branches, [30] that neither has a comfortable shade, nor is it of any use against the scorching heat. [31] It emits sparks (as huge) as castles, [32] as if they were yellowish camels. [33] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [34] This is a day when they will not speak, [35] nor will they be allowed to offer excuses. [36] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [37] (It will be said to them,) "This is the Day of Decision. We have assembled you and the earlier ones together. [38] Now, if you have a trick, use the trick against Me." [39] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [40]

Of course, the God-fearing will be amid shades and streams, [41] and fruits of their desire. [42] It will be said to them, "Eat and drink with pleasure because of what you used to do." [43] This is how We reward those who do good. [44] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [45] "(O disbelievers,) eat and drink for a while! You are guilty ones." [46] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [47] And when it is said to them, "Bow down (i.e. submit to Allah's commands)", they do not bow down. [48] Woe, that Day, to the deniers! [49] Now, in which discourse, after this, will they believe? [50]

Commentary

Occasion of Revelation

Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī records from Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd  that he said:

"While we were with Allah's Messenger in a cave at Minā, the Sūrah 'wal-Mursalāt' was revealed to him. He was reciting it, and I was learning it from his mouth. Verily, his mouth was moist with it, when a snake leaped out at us. The Holy Prophet  said, 'Kill it!' So we quickly went after it, but it got away. Then the Holy Prophet  said, 'It was saved from your harm, just as you all were saved from its harm'." [Ibn Kathīr].

Allah swears oaths in this Sūrah by various phenomena to assert that the Resurrection will certainly take place. The names of the phenomena are not mentioned in the Qurʾān, but their five attributes are given in the following manner (The translation is given below without explanatory brackets for a better understanding of the point):

[1] (I swear) by those that are sent one after the other, (77:1)

[2] and by those that blow violently, (77:2)

[3] and by those that spread all over, (77:3)

[4] and by those who differentiate (between right and wrong) distinctly, (77:4)

[5] then bring down the advice, (77:5)

There is no traceable Ḥadīth that gives the exact interpretation of the phenomena described. Therefore, the interpretation assigned to them by the Companions and their pupils differ. Some scholars say that all five attributes refer to angels. Others say that possibly different groups of angels are bearers of the attributes. Yet other scholars say that they refer to various types of winds. Some authorities on Tafsīr say that they refer to Allah's Prophets and Messengers. Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī says that, in this matter, it is safer to observe silence. He says that both possibilities exist, but he prefers not to side with any particular interpretation. There is no doubt about the fact that some of the attributes are more appropriately applicable to the angels of Allah, and cannot fit the winds without unusual stretch of imagination, and others are more appropriately applicable to winds, and cannot apply to angels without a fanciful stretch of imagination. Therefore, Ibn Kathīr's approach seems to be the best. He says that in the first three verses of this Sūrah, Allah swears oaths by various types of winds. In verses [4] and [5], Allah swears oaths by the angels.

If verses [4] and [5] are applied to the winds, then the imagination will have to be stretched far to interpret them. Likewise, if the first three verses [*mursalāt*, *ʿAṣīfāt* and *nashirāt*] are applied to the angels, they have no choice but to assign far-fetched interpretation. According to Ibn Kathīr, the verses signify '(I swear) by those (winds) that are sent one after the other'. The word *ʿurfān* could signify 'beneficial and useful'. The

winds that bring rain are obviously beneficial and useful. Another meaning of the word '*urfan*' is 'one after another'. In this interpretation, the verse signifies 'those winds that bring rain and clouds consecutively'. The word '*ʿaṣifāt*' is derived from '*ʿaṣf*' that literally means 'winds that blow violently or vehemently'. This refers to fiercely blowing winds that sometimes do occur in the world. The word '*nashirāt*' refers to 'winds that spread (clouds) all over after the rain is over'. The word '*fāriqāt*' is the attribute of the angels 'who differentiate (between right and wrong) distinctly by bringing down the Divine revelation'. The phrase '*fal-mulqiyāti dhikran*' also refers to the 'angels'. The word '*dhikr*' 'Reminder' refers to the Qur'ān or revelation in general. The verse signifies 'I swear by angels who [by bringing down revelation] separate between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, [and the lawful and the forbidden]'. Likewise, I swear by angels who bring down revelation or Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This interpretation is plain and simple, and does not require any undue stretch of imagination.

In this interpretation, the question arises as to the contextual relationship between swearing oaths by various types of winds and the angels. First of all, it is not possible to fathom the Wisdom of Divine speech. However, it is possible to hypothesise. Allah swears oaths by useful winds and harmful winds. Winds that bring rain and clouds are useful, while those that blow fiercely and cause destruction are harmful. These belong to the perceptible world. All human beings can observe them. The perceptible things are mentioned first for reflection. The imperceptible world is mentioned later, such as the angels and revelation. If man reflects carefully on them, he will develop certainty of belief in them as well.

عُذْرًا أَوْ نَذْرًا (to provide excuses [for the believers] or giving warnings (to disbelievers...77:6) This phrase is complement to verse [5]: فَأَنزَلْنَاهُ فَيُنذِرُ then bring down the advice, [77:5] The 'advice' refers to the 'revelation' that came down upon the Prophets. Verse 6 says that it serves two purposes. In the case of the people of truth and believers, it persuades them to seek excuse from Allah for their shortcomings, and pray for forgiveness; and in the case of the people of falsehood and disbelievers, it contains a warning for them of Allah's torment, if they oppose His command.

إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَاقِعٌ (...that which you are promised is sure to happen...77:7)

This is the subject of these oaths. It means that the Day of Judgement, Reckoning, and Reward and Punishment that is promised by the Prophets has certainly to be fulfilled. Allah then describes some of the events that will occur on the Day of Judgement. The stars will be extinguished, which could mean that they will be completely destroyed, or they will exist, but their lights will be lost. In this way the entire world will be plunged in absolute darkness. The second event to occur is the splitting of the sky. The third event to occur is that the mountains will be blown away as dust. The fourth event is described in the following verse:

وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أَقْبَتَتْ (and when the messengers will be assembled at the appointed time, [then all matters will be decided.] [77:11] The word *uqqitat* is derived from *tauqīt* which primarily means 'appointment of time'. According to Zamakhsharī, it signifies 'to arrive at an appointed time' [as cited in Rūḥ]. In this context, the second meaning appears to be more appropriate. The verse signifies that the appointed time for the Prophets and Messengers to assemble with their communities will arrive, so that all matters concerning them may be decided. The verses further describe the Day of Judgement as the great and horrible day and the Day of Decision. It shall be the day of destruction for the deniers and rejecters, thus:

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ (Woe, that Day, to the deniers!...77:15) The word *wail* means 'destruction'. According to certain Ḥadīth narratives, the word *wail* is a 'valley of Hell where the pus of the wounds of the inmates of Hell will be collected. This is the place where the deniers will live. After this, the present-day people are asked to learn a lesson from [the destruction] of the former generations, thus:

أَلَمْ نُهْلِكِ الْأَوَّلِينَ (Did We not destroy the earlier people?...77:16) It refers to the nations of 'Ād, Thamūd, nation of Lūṭ (لُوطٌ) and Fir'aun (The Pharaoh) who were destroyed because of their obstinacy.

ثُمَّ نَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْآخِرِينَ (Then We will cause the later ones to follow them....77:17) According to popular reading, Verse 17 purports to say that the present-day infidels, the people of Makkah, will receive punishment soon. They were punished and destroyed by Muslims in the Battle of Badr and so on. The difference between the punishment of former nations and the community of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is as follows: The former nations used

to be destroyed by celestial punishment with all their habitations. The infidels in the community of the Holy Prophet ﷺ do not receive celestial punishment, because of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ special honour. They are punished by the weapons of Muslims. Furthermore, the destruction is not general. Only the obdurate criminal leaders are destroyed.

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا. أَحْيَاءَ وَأَمْوَاتًا (Did We not make the earth a container that collects the living and the dead?...25, 26) The word *kifāt* is derived from *kaft*. It means 'to gather things together'. Thus *kifāt* is a thing that embodies many things within itself. Earth is created by Allah in a fashion that humans when alive, remain on its back, and when dead, in its belly.

إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ. كَأَنَّهُ جِبِلَّتٌ صُفْرٌ (It emits sparks [as huge] as castles...77:32) The word *qaṣr* means a 'huge, magnificent castle'. The word *jimālah* is used in the sense of *jamal*, and means 'camel'. The word *ṣufr* is the plural of *aṣfar* which means 'yellow'. The verse describes the fire of Hell. It will emit such huge sparks of fire, as if they were huge and magnificent castles. Then they will break up into little splinters, as if they were yellowish camels. Some scholars have translated the word '*ṣufr*' as 'black' because yellowish colour of camels tends to blackness. [Rūḥ].

هَذَا يَوْمٌ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ. وَلَا يُؤَدِّنُ لَهُمْ فِعْتَدِرُونَ (This is a day when they will not speak, nor will they be allowed to offer excuses...77:35, 36) In other words, this is the Day in which they will not be able to talk, nor will they be permitted to offer pleas for their misdeeds. However, other verses of the Qur'ān inform us that they will speak and will be permitted to offer excuses. There is no discrepancy between the two verses, because there will be various stages on the Plain of Gathering (*Maḥshar*) through which people will have to pass. Sometimes they will pass through a stage where it would be forbidden for them to speak or offer excuses; and at another stage they will be permitted. [Rūḥ].

كُلُوا وَامْتَنِعُوا قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ مُعْجَمُونَ ("Eat and drink for a while! You are guilty ones...77:46) This verse addresses the infidels through the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They may eat and drink and enjoy themselves in this world, but the span is short, and then there will be nothing but punishment for them. [Abū Ḥayyān].

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ (And when it is said to them, "Bow down", they do not bow down...77:48) According to most commentators, the word *rukū'*

is used here in its primitive sense 'to bow down and submit'. The verse signifies that when they were told to submit to the Divine commands, they refused to comply. Some scholars take the word *rukū'* in its technical sense and interpret the verse to signify 'when they are called to prayer, they refused to pray.' The *rukū'* is a part of the prayer, but it refers here to the whole prayer . [Rūḥ]

فَبَايَ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ (Now, in which discourse, after this, will they believe? ...77:50) The Holy Qur'ān is the last Book of Allah which explains its message and wisdom most lucidly, excellently, eloquently, elegantly, and its arguments most convincingly. Its style is extremely effective and the admonition soul-capturing. If they do not believe in such a Book, then for which word are they waiting? This is to express disappointment in them. A Ḥadīth narrative instructs that when one recites this verse, he should say 'I believe in Allah'. This statement must be made outside the prayer, or in voluntary prayer. He must abstain from this statement in obligatory and *Sunnah* prayer. Ḥadīth narratives are clear on this point. And Allah knows best!

Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Mursalāt
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